



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

FARM LABOR



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FLORIDA

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 63,000 for the week of April 8 through 14. Farmers hired 55,000 in April 2007 compared with 44,000 in October 2006 and 52,000 in April 2006. Agricultural services provided 8,000 paid workers, equal to the number supplied in April 2006, but up 3,000 from the October 2006 number.

Early in the survey week, frost nipped some northern vegetables; strong winds at the end of the week damaged leaves of some taller vegetables while wind-borne sand bruised some fruit. Potato digging was underway in the Palatka area and okra cutting started in Miami-Dade County. Other non-citrus fruits and vegetables harvested during the week included snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, tomatoes and watermelons. Vegetable harvests neared peak levels for the season during April. Citrus harvest remained active during the survey week. Citrus grove caretakers hedged and topped trees, applied post bloom nutritional sprays, scouted for greening of trees and removed diseased trees.

The April combined Farmers and Agricultural Services all hired worker wage rate averaged \$10.07 per hour, 60 cents more than the \$9.47 paid in October 2006 and 83 cents more than last year's wage of \$9.24 per hour. Farmers paid an average of \$10.01 per hour, 59 cents higher than the \$9.42 paid in October 2006, and 82 cents above the \$9.19 paid in April 2006. Agricultural Services paid workers an average of \$10.45 per hour, 55 cents more than the \$9.90 paid in October 2006 and 85 cents more than the \$9.60 paid in April 2006.

UNITED STATES

Hired Workers Unchanged, Wage Rates Up 4 Percent From one Year Ago

There were 961,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 8-14, 2007, unchanged from a year ago. A large increase in California was enough to offset the large declines in hired workers in most other regions, resulting in a net change of zero from last April. Of these hired workers, 720,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 241,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.17 per hour during the April 2007 reference week, up 39 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$9.35 per hour, up 40 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$9.55 per hour compared with \$9.31 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$9.41 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.6 hours for hired workers during the survey week, down fractionally from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired farm workers from last year occurred in California, Florida, and in the Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) and Mountain I (Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming) regions. In California, last year's reference week was plagued by rainfall and unseasonably cool temperatures, which delayed most field work. This year, a return to more normal weather patterns allowed cotton and rice planting to progress well ahead of average, increasing the demand for field workers. Cold, wet conditions in the Northeast II region slowed most outdoor field activities. However, continued strong demand from nurseries, greenhouses, and dairies was more than enough to offset the reduced need for workers in most other agricultural sectors. In the Mountain I region, dry, seasonable weather in Idaho offset below normal temperatures and damp conditions in the rest of the region, resulting in a collectively higher demand for hired workers. Florida experienced abnormally dry conditions last April. This year, soil moisture levels have increased, allowing more field work to be accomplished and causing more hired workers to be needed.

The largest decreases in the number of hired farm workers from a year ago were in the Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia), Appalachian II (Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), and Northeast I (New England and New York) regions. In the Appalachian I and II regions, hard freezes early in the reference week, along with heavy rains later in the week, severely curtailed most field activities. Therefore, the demand for hired workers in both regions was

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TABLE 1 -- Florida agricultural workers, number of workers, wage rates, and hours worked, April 8 through 14, 2007, with comparisons

Employer, Year, and Survey Week		Hired Workers						
		Number of Workers			Hours Worked Per Week	Wages Paid by Type of Work		
		All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
			150 days or more	149 days or less				
HIRED BY FARMERS ^{1/}		Thousands			Hours	Dollars Per Hour ^{2/}		
2007	April 8 - 14	55.0	46.0	9.0	39.2	10.01	9.20	9.00
	January 7 – 13 ^{3/}							
2006	October 8 - 14	44.0	40.0	4.0	41.1	9.42	8.50	9.10
	July 9 - 15	43.0	38.0	5.0	41.0	9.40	8.39	9.10
	April 9 - 15	52.0	44.0	8.0	40.4	9.19	8.37	8.50
	January 8 – 14	49.0	38.0	11.0	39.2	9.55	8.80	8.80
2005	October 9 - 15	42.0	37.0	5.0	39.4	9.33	8.60	8.45
	July 10 - 16	41.0	39.0	2.0	41.3	9.70	8.75	9.15
	April 10 - 16	49.0	41.0	8.0	38.7	9.31	8.20	9.90
	January 9 - 15	48.0	37.0	11.0	38.7	9.52	8.50	8.60
HIRED BY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2007	April 8 - 14	8.0			40.0	10.45		
	January 7 – 13 ^{3/}							
2006	October 8- 14	5.0			42.0	9.90		
	July 9 – 15	3.0			45.0	9.50		
	April 9 – 15	8.0			40.0	9.60		
	January 8 – 14	9.0			40.0	9.20		
2005	October 9 – 15	3.0			41.0	9.65		
	July 10 -16	2.0			45.0	9.90		
	April 10 – 16	10.0			39.0	9.10		
	January 9 – 15	8.0			40.0	9.50		
HIRED BY BOTH FARMERS & AGRICULTURAL SERVICES								
2007	April 8 – 14	63.0				10.07		
	January 7 – 13 ^{3/}							
2006	October 8 – 14	49.0				9.47		
	July 9 – 15	46.0				9.41		
	April 9 – 15	60.0				9.24		
	January 8 – 14	58.0				9.49		
2005	October 9 – 15	45.0				9.35		
	July 10 -16	43.0				9.71		
	April 10 – 16	59.0				9.27		
	January 9 – 15	56.0				9.52		

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Services workers.

^{2/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

^{3/} The January Farm Labor Survey was not conducted.

**TABLE 2 -- Number of workers hired by farmers, wage rates, and hours worked,
Selected States, April 8 through 14, 2007, with comparisons ^{1/}**

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ^{2/}
	<i>Thousands</i>					
ALL HIRED WORKERS						
April 8-14, 2007	55	160	50	17	7	720
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	52	137	55	17	7	720
EXPECTED TO WORK						
150 days or more						
April 8-14, 2007	46	135	38	16	6	580
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	44	116	42	16	6	581
149 days or less						
April 8-14, 2007	9	25	12	1	1	140
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	8	21	13	1	1	139
	<i>Average hours per week</i>					
HOURS WORKED BY ALL HIRED WORKERS						
April 8-14, 2007	39.2	45.5	37.9	44.5	39.2	40.6
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	40.4	43.0	39.2	48.7	36.6	40.8
	<i>Dollars per hour ^{4/}</i>					
WAGES BY TYPE OF WORKER						
Field						
April 8-14, 2007	9.20	9.62	8.35	8.25	10.60	9.35
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	8.37	8.93	8.24	8.14	9.79	8.95
Livestock						
April 8-14, 2007	9.00	10.90	9.41	8.88	^{5/}	9.55
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	8.50	10.80	9.06	9.13	^{5/}	9.31
Field & Livestock Combined						
April 8-14, 2007	9.17	9.80	8.80	8.51	10.77	9.41
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	8.39	9.21	8.64	8.60	9.93	9.06
ALL HIRED WORKER WAGE RATE						
April 8-14, 2007	10.01	10.63	9.22	9.28	12.85	10.17
January 7-13, 2007 ^{3/}						
April 9-15, 2006	9.19	10.18	9.37	9.17	11.96	9.78

^{1/} Excludes Agricultural Service workers.

^{2/} United States exclude Alaska.

^{3/} The January Farm Labor was not conducted.

^{4/} Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

^{5/} Insufficient data for livestock.

considerably lower. Frigid temperatures, torrential rains, and snow from two strong winter storms caused major field work delays in the Corn Belt II, Southern Plains, and Northeast I regions. Field worker demand was down in all three regions due to these undesirable conditions.

Hired farm worker wage rates were generally above a year ago in most regions. The largest increases occurred in the Appalachian II, Mountain II (Colorado, Nevada, and Utah), Delta (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi), and Northern Plains (Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota) regions, and Florida. In the Appalachian II and Mountain II regions, the higher wages were due to a larger proportion of salaried workers putting in fewer hours, which pushed the average hourly wage higher. The higher wages in the Delta region were due to a greater percentage of nursery and greenhouse workers in the work force. In the Northern Plains region, the higher wages were due to a lower proportion of part time workers. The higher wages in Florida were due to a larger percentage of fresh market vegetable pickers in the work force. Tomatoes and other fresh market vegetables require extra care and skill during harvest to minimize crop damage. Therefore, these workers receive higher wages.

Reliability of Farm Labor Estimates

SURVEY PROCEDURES: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of April using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected.

Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from an area sampling frame. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the labor survey sample to represent all farms. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was April 8-14, 2007.

RELIABILITY: Two types of errors, sampling and non-sampling, are always present in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "accuracy" of the estimates.

Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102; which is the survey estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for number of hired workers at the U.S. level is normally less than 5 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 12 and 17 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.8 percent. The relative sampling error was 0.6 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 1 and 5 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 2 and 16 percent at the regional level.

Non-sampling errors can occur in a complete census as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in editing, coding or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize non-sampling errors.

REVISION POLICY: Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published or the year after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for April 2006 were subject to revision with this report. If any revisions were made to previous data, they are reprinted in this report for your information, and they are identified as such.